

CLR-15 (Fwd) Maintenance Company

28 February 2006

Family and Friends of 1st Maintenance Company, CLR-15 (FWD)

I am Major Mark Birk, the Commanding Officer of 1st Maintenance Company. I take this opportunity to let you know your Marines are doing well. They all prepared well for this deployment and I know it was done with the help of their families. The Marines they are replacing are very impressed as well as me. The company was able to complete the RIP/TOA, relief in place/transfer of authority early because of the abilities of your Marines and I thank you.



Most of us have been to Iraq before, but this time it seemed more organized as we only spend about two days in Kuwait waiting on a flight north. They all arrived safely and quickly began the transfer of equipment and responsibility.

Most of us are staying here in Al Taqaddum, AB (TQ). Instead of "Hotel California", where we lived in 2004/2005, we now live in 8' x 20' containers, which we call, "cans." They have a bunk bed, two wall lockers, and a night stand. Some of the Marines have already made TV stands and assorted furniture... Some of the cans have cable hook-up, but don't get too excited, there are only eight channels. All of the cans will have cable hook-up before too long. The cans are closer to the mess hall and closer to work this time. I have heard the mess hall provides the best food in Iraq as well. This might be because most of the contractors live here at TQ. There are also many more Hessco or sand barriers all around the cans and work areas. It's kind of like walking through a mouse maze to get to work.

All in all, we are doing very well. Your Marines are all performing in the typical outstanding Marine manner. I am very proud of them, as I know you are as well. I ask all of you for your continued support throughout this deployment. It is that extra bit of motivation that these Marines will use to accomplish every task.

God bless you and yours!

Semper Fidelis!
Mark Birk
Major USMC